



## Iowa County to be Added to WI Gypsy Moth Quarantine

**Release Date:** January 15, 2014

**Media Contact:** Donna Gilson, 608-224-5130, [donna.gilson@wi.gov](mailto:donna.gilson@wi.gov)

Jim Dick, Communications Director, 608-224-5020, [james.dick@wisconsin.gov](mailto:james.dick@wisconsin.gov)

MADISON—Trapping data and field surveys indicate that the gypsy moth, an invasive insect that feeds on the leaves of hundreds of species of trees and shrubs, is reproducing and taking hold in another Wisconsin county.

On March 31, 2014, Iowa County officially will be placed under state gypsy moth quarantine, joining most of eastern and central Wisconsin already considered to be generally infested with the pest. Iowa County is the 49<sup>th</sup> of Wisconsin's 72 counties to be quarantined for gypsy moth.

In most counties, the quarantine has the greatest impact on plant nurseries, Christmas tree growers and lumber mills because of inspection requirements.

"The quarantine requires that Christmas trees, logs and nursery stock be inspected and certified as gypsy moth-free before they can be transported into non-quarantine counties or non-quarantine states," said Brian Kuhn, director of the Plant Industry Bureau at the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection. "This is to prevent the introduction of the gypsy moth into areas that either don't have it or have low populations of the pest."

Trees, wood and nursery stock are not the only ways gypsy moths can hitch a ride. People living in a quarantine county must be careful when moving any outdoor item. Because female gypsy moths can lay eggs on nearly anything kept outside, there is a risk of moving gypsy moths when moving things like patio furniture, campers, boat trailers or firewood.

"If you are going camping or to your cabin, check your gear before leaving to be sure you aren't carrying any gypsy moths with you. This is very important if you're headed to areas in far western Wisconsin, Minnesota or Iowa where gypsy moths aren't as prevalent," Kuhn said.

"If you're moving to a non-quarantine state, authorities there may stop you and ask if your possessions have been checked for gypsy moths or gypsy moth egg masses," Kuhn said. "Some states are more rigorous than others in stopping vehicles at their borders, but any non-quarantine state may check. Even if you're moving to a non-quarantined part of Wisconsin, you need to check your outdoor furniture and other items for gypsy moths. It's not just a legality; you don't want to be the one to infest a new area, and remember, your yard at your new home will be the first one affected." The U.S. Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service has a pamphlet titled *It's the Law: Before Moving Check for the Gypsy Moth*, available from major moving companies and online at <http://www.hungrypests.com/YourMoveGypsyMothFree/pdf/Gypsy-Moth-Brochure.pdf>.

It's important to remember the quarantine restrictions even though you may not notice widespread devastation in the quarantine area. Just because you don't see trees standing bare or hairy caterpillars crawling everywhere doesn't mean the quarantined county doesn't have a problem.

"A county can be infested, but gypsy moths may be concentrated in certain areas, so not everyone may notice them or experience the same level of damage," Kuhn said.

Gypsy moth was brought from Europe to the Boston area in 1869 and has since spread into much of the Northeastern and Midwestern United States and Canada. It was discovered in Wisconsin in the late 1960s. Counties in eastern Wisconsin were placed under quarantine starting in 1993. The leading edge of the gypsy moth infestation now stretches from Rock County to Bayfield County.

"If we did nothing to control the gypsy moth, that leading edge would've been through Wisconsin and into Minnesota now, with much more damage done. We will continue our work to eliminate isolated outbreaks in non-quarantined areas and slow the spread of gypsy moth across Wisconsin," Kuhn explained.

For more information, contact Christopher Deegan at 608-224-4573 or email [christopher.deegan@wisconsin.gov](mailto:christopher.deegan@wisconsin.gov). Also connect with DATCP on Twitter at [twitter.com/widatcp](https://twitter.com/widatcp) or Facebook at [facebook.com/widatcp](https://facebook.com/widatcp). Additional information is available online at [gypsymoth.wi.gov](http://gypsymoth.wi.gov).

# # #